⛩Local Gossip⛩

January meeting

Yokosuka Computer Club will meet
Wednesday, January 14, at 6 p.m. in the
General Practice Clinic Conference Room at
the Hospital. The major topic of discussion
will be a proposed merger with the Com-
modore Users Club of Yokosuka.

December meeting

For several months YCC has suffered
from a severe shortage of officers. Final-
ly, the remaining officers issued an ulti-
matum: someone would step in and take
over the club, or the officers would do-
nate the club's treasury or embezzle it.

About the same time Big Things were
happening elsewhere. Capt. Howell, the
new base C.O., gave a briefing in which
he suggested official base sponsorship for
the computer club. This would provide
one important benefit: space. In the past,
the club could not purchase equipment
and other "durable goods" because there
was no place to keep such items. The club
library is housed both at
the base library and in
private homes, leading to
frequent confusion. Final-
ly, a long-standing project
to set up a computer bul-
letin board has been held
up due to lack of space.
(By comparison, virtually
all computer clubs at oth-
er military bases in Japan
have both permanent
quarters and a computer

bulletin board, even though they are all
smaller than Yokosuka.)

Also about this time, the Commodore
Users Club of Yokosuka was suffering
growing pains. Several CUCY members
proposed a merger with YCC to create a
new, expanded YCC. A stronger YCC
would then carry on the search for per-
manent quarters, setting up a bulletin
board, etc.

This proposal seemed very attractive
to the YCC officers and members at the
December meeting, and a merger was
unanimously approved. If adopted by
CUCY at their Jan. 6 meeting, the two
club treasuries would be combined,
CUCY's officers would take over manage-
ment of YCC, and CUCY would dissolve. A
per capita portion of the treasury would
be allocated to Special Interest Groups
(SIGs) to purchase, for example, Commo-
dore 64 public domain (PD) software, Ap-
ple II PD software, Amiga PD software,
etc. The main treasury would continue to
be used for the newsletter and, eventual-
ly, bulletin board support.

If you would like to
know more, please attend
the January club meet-
ing, ambush a YCC or CU-
CY officer, or send the
editor a note.

Bulletin board

What is a bulletin
board, and why should I
care? A bulletin board is
a collection of programs,
information files and
whatever that you reach
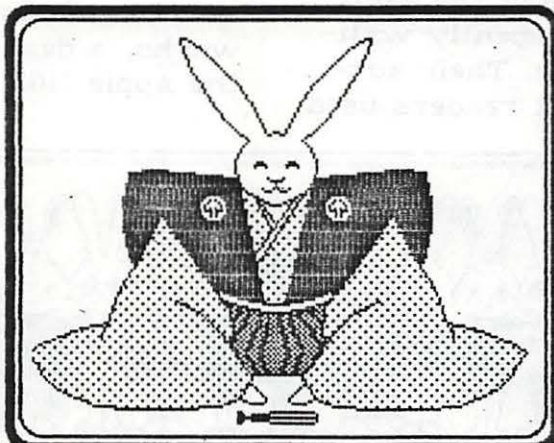
via a modem. Most bulletin board programs can store Commodore, Apple, IBM, and whatnot programs on the same system, allowing different machines to trade programs and gossip.

For example, Zenith users who wonder why their machines always fail the video test could discover the diagnostics disk is configured wrong, Commodore CP/M users could download Apple and Osborne CP/M utilities, and this newsletter could be sent straight into your machine. All you need to use a computer bulletin board is a terminal program and a modem.

Skywalker, cont.

Skywalker, mentioned in the last newsletter, apparently is not American-owned, but it does have a wide range of discount (U.S.-comparable) computer products. You can pick up an IBM PC/XT compatible for ¥150,000, a Bell/CCITT 1200 baud modem for ¥35,000 (allows you to reach American and Japanese bulletin boards), a Laser 128 (Apple II compatible) for $395, and tons of discount software (heavily biased towards the IBM, but also including Apple II and Mac stuff).

Skywalker has an ad in the December **Off Duty** magazine that includes a price list and a map. The store is just one room on the fourth floor of an office building, but they always have someone on hand who speaks English.

Editorial

Yeah, this whole newsletter is editorial, but this is different. **InfoWorld**, the original "news, gossip and innuendo" newspaper, has recently taken a sharp turn to pinstripes. Once a hacker's rag, it now lacks the spice and zip of the early years, and the editor has recently written that this was deliberate. Their surveys, he claims, show most readers used
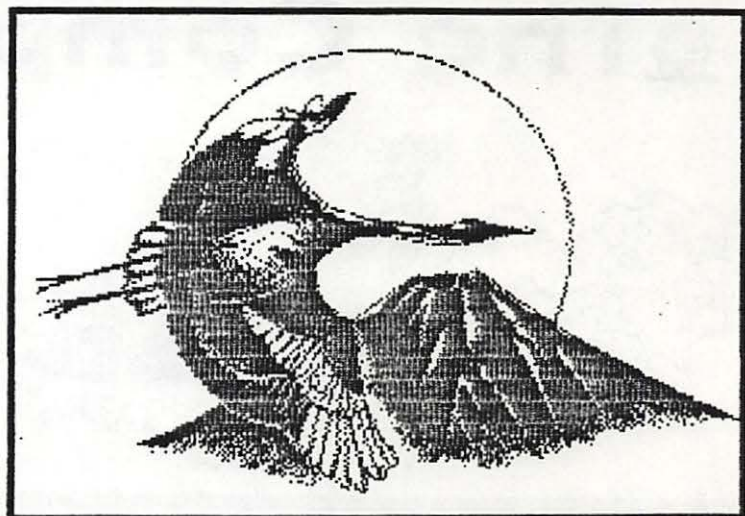
micros in big business and government, so that's what **InfoWorld** will cover.

What the editor failed to ask is if this was what readers wanted. Since they are users, do they really need **Business Week**-style articles on corporate politics, business practices, and other MBA foolishness? Couldn't they just buy **Business Week** instead?
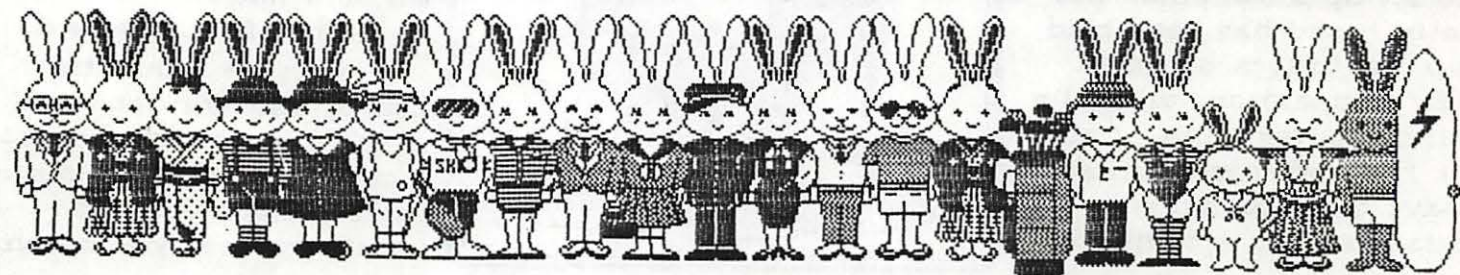
Recently **InfoWorld** started a special Macintosh section, saying this was done "in response to the growing importance" of Macs in corporate environments. Notice there is no mention of **people** using Macs -- only corporate "environments." There is no Apple II section, nor Commodore, Xerox, Kaypro, Amiga, or even IBM section. Yet **InfoWorld** thinks the Mac needs one to be officially "blessed." It's thinking like this that put 300,000 Korean cars in American driveways in 1986.

Non-Local Gossip

IIGS desktop publishing

Megahaus Corp. has announced Pageworks, a desktop publishing package for the Apple IIGS. Priced at $125, the pro-

gram works with Apple's Imagewriter and Laserwriter printers. The program will not run on a IIc or IIe.

Appleworks 2.0

AppleWorks 2.0 now automatically recognizes increased memory size (at least with Apple's memory cards), allows for a larger desktop, and can use Apple expansion memory as a RAMdisk.

More room

Owners of Apple IIc machines can now get a genuine Apple 256K memory expansion kit for $269, with an extra 256K for just $69. There's a catch: it works on a redesigned IIc motherboard. If you have an old motherboard, all U.S. Apple dealers will give you both the memory and the new motherboard for $269 -- which may not do you much good in Japan.

IBM-Apple

DOS BOOT, a terrible pun, is a hardware device for the Apple IIGS which allows it to run IBM PC programs. Priced at $500-700, the card will have 256K, two PC serial ports, an IBM color graphics emulator, and a 4.77 MHz 8088 CPU.

Amiga delays

Commodore says they haven't given up on the Amiga, claiming promised hardware products have been delayed by the Federal Communications Commission. The placement of Amiga's bus extension on the side of the machine makes it difficult to design products which pass FCC Class B certification.

Amiga-IBM

Central Coast Software now has a file transfer program, DOS-2-DOS, for the Amiga that transfers all MSDOS file types to and from Amiga DOS. It supports 3.5 and 5.25 inch diskettes, converts ASCII file line-ending characters, and supports path names and wild card characters in file names, all for $55.

Amiga 2500

Commodore is planning an Amiga 2500 which will include Kickstart (part of the Amiga operating system) in ROM, where it doesn't occupy any disk space or RAM. The 2500 will also include internal expansion slots, and offer one expansion card allowing the Amiga to run IBM PC programs.

Down with MSDOS

Apple is challenging the Army's policy of standardizing on MSDOS systems, claiming the life-cycle costs for MSDOS are higher, hardware costs more (because of no set standard for video boards and expansion boards), and training costs are much higher. The Army's selection of MSDOS (and, by extension, the other services as well) has shut out the Macintosh from most government contracts, even in areas where it is clearly superior. Atari and Commodore, eager to sell their ST and Amiga machines, are watching Apple's challenge with interest.

Fast lap, will travel

NEC is now selling the Multispeed in the U.S., an IBM PC-compatible laptop which operates at 4.77 MHz and 9.54 MHz. It comes with MSDOS 3.2, has two 3.5 inch diskettes, a super-twist LCD flat display, 640K RAM and 512K ROM. The big ROM contains an outliner, notepad, tele-

*Your computer club needs you...*to help fend off the forces of darkness and ignorance. Volunteer today for a position of responsibility, help lead the digital world to freedom, and indulge your hunger for power, prestige, and hyperbole: become an officer!

communications program, and simple database. The notepad includes a 20,000 word dictionary. All this weighs 12 pounds, runs on the built-in battery for 4-6 hours, has serial, parallel, RGB, and external floppy ports, and costs $1995.

Warning

Beware -- several mail order companies have been causing problems for local people, either through never shipping items, charging more, charging high shipping fees, etc. Recent companies causing trouble include: H&E Computronics, Northeastern Software, PC Network (Chicago), and Programs Plus. On the other hand, ComputerWare (109 California Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94306) has been widely praised for superb service. If you have any problems or praises, send them to the editor.

Phone help

Novation, Inc., has released the MA-100, a compact little adapter which allows direct connect modems and portable laptop computers to use non-modular telephones (such as the funny decorator kind, or the funny Japanese kind, etc). Priced at $129, it is supposed to be compatible with all direct connect modems.

Cereal, er, serial help

Several people have been having trouble hooking up RS-232 serial equipment, or running serial patch cables between different computers. IQ Technologies (11811 NE First St., Bellevue, WA 98005) has a neat gadget that may be just what you need. Their Smart Cable (retail price: $49) automatically figures out how to send a signal between two serial devices. A built-in microprocessor sorts out the signals, so you don't have to buy a custom cable, and the price isn't much more than a regular cable. Your newsletter editor has one (Model SC817) to connect his Tandy Model 600 to a Macintosh, and has had no problems. It comes with a six foot cable, and one end has both male and female connectors.

The good old days

de Morgen, one of Brussels leading daily papers, suffered a computer failure in early December and produced the entire paper by hand -- literally. All 32 pages of articles and headlines were reproduced in pencil (the hand-drawn front page headline read, "Wie Schrijft Die Blijft") then photo-reproduced for printing. Just think what they could have done with a Macintosh, or IBM, or Apple II, Commodore, Atari, Timex-Sinclair, or even good handwriting!

CD-ROMS, anyone?

Philips, the big Dutch company which invented the compact disc (along with Sony), claims to have shipped 10,000 CD ROM drives. Yes, but did anyone buy them?

50,000 pictures

PC Quick-Art, Inc., is working on a CD ROM art library -- one compact disc with 50,000 images for the IBM PC or Apple Macintosh. Naturally, no price has

This is not the Midway; we tried to stuff it in the newsletter, but ol' CV-41 is an analog device, and doesn't digitize well. But if someone will send the editor a good b&w photo, 5x7 or larger, we can try. (He'd also like a photo of an F/A-18.) Speaking of illustrations, the little pictures in the margins of last month's newsletter were Macintosh icons. Instead of typing in program names, you click on the icon to run a program. Each icon is just 32x32 pixels, making them one of the world's smallest and oddest art forms. Amiga and Atari ST icons can appear in color.

been mentioned.

Totally Tubular

Valley Tubular Industries, Saskatoon, Saskatchewa, has a computer chair which "easily converts" from "traditional ergonomic mode" to "the revolutionary orthopedic mode." Can you sit on it, too?

Quote of the Month

"The paperless office is as much a reality as the paperless bathroom" -- Alan Hald, Chairman, MicroAge Computer Stores.

2nd best

Marvin Minsky, MIT's leading computer scientist, has recently started defining AI [artificial intelligence] as "making computers do things we don't know how to do yet."

Bargain Ada

DOD wants you to use the Ada language. In fact, if you write programs for DOD, you're required to use Ada. But nobody does, since Ada was generally unavailable -- until now! ALSYS, Inc., 1432 Main St., Waltham, MA 02154 is just pleased as punch that their Ada computer system has been validated by the Ada Joint Program Office. And it runs on the new Zenith Z-248 machines the military is buying! So rush right out and send them an order -- send them ten orders! At $2,995 a copy, how can you go wrong? (This price includes the required 4 megabyte RAM board.)

Another bargain

Want to buy something useful for your IBM? GOLDATA has several barely useful desk accessories, but there real star is Chuckle Pops. Yes, for just $14.95 (free with any order over $50) you can get this amazing desk accessory which will put a joke up on your screen with just the touch of a key -- in the middle of a spread sheet, or word processor, or whatever! Sample:

Patient: Doctor, how can I get rid of this constant ringing in my ear?

Doctor: Get an unlisted ear!

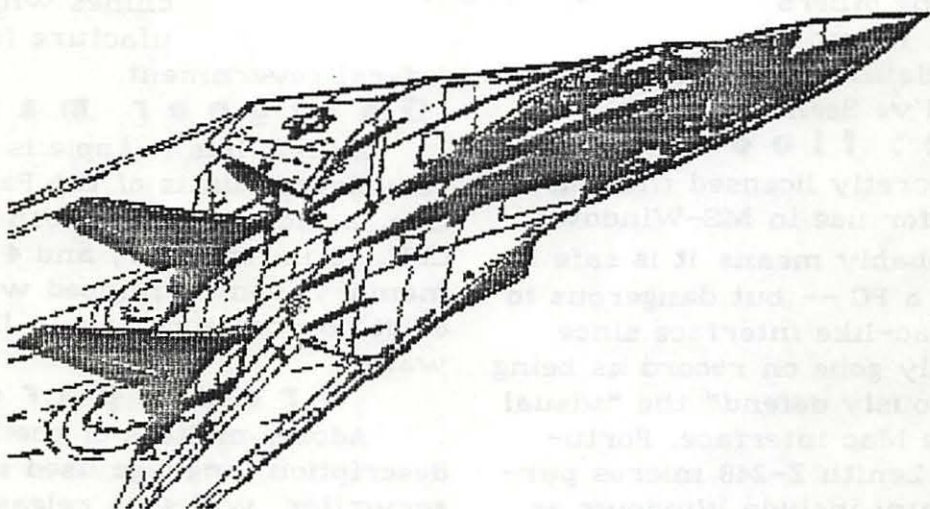Quality software like this runs only on the IBM PC or compatibles.

Official computer of the PLO

Compaq, a leading maker of IBM PC clones, has a new feature on their Portable II: a bomb. After several computers started exploding -- not just mild little pops, but case-destroying explosions -- Compaq issued a press release blaming repair technicians who improperly "repaired" the lithium battery.

Coming here?

Tandy (Radio Shack) is a big hit at some military exchanges in the U.S. Since September, Tandy's 1000SX and 1000EX, both IBM PC-compatibles, have outsold all Apple, Commodore and Zenith machines sold at these exchanges -- combined. So far, just 135 AAFES and 35 NEX outlets are selling the machines.

It Works

Microsoft is working on an IBM PC integrated package with word processor, spreadsheet, database and telecommunications, to be called Works for the PC. Unlike the popular Works package on the Macintosh, the PC version will be character based, without graphics.

Lyterate

And now for something completely different: Xerox PC Type Right. Take an IBM PC keyboard, plug it into the $199 Type Right box, plug the box into the PC, and type. When you type a word not included in the 100,000 word Type Right dictionary, it beeps. Marketed by Microlytics, it could mark a revolution in Navy correspondence by making it readable --

Microlytics has used the Xerox technology to put an 80,000 word dictionary and 80,000 word thesaurus in a 128K ROM chip. The company thinks this would be just the thing for laptops, many of which are owned by illiterate newspaper journalists.

Goodbye

IBM, suffering a financial shortfall, has been pruning staff through attrition and moving others to new locations. Many employees now claim the company's initials stand for "I've Been Moved."

Next: floors

Microsoft secretly licensed the Macintosh interface for use in MS-Windows in 1985. This probably means it is safe to use Windows on a PC -- but dangerous to use any other Mac-like interface since Apple has recently gone on record as being willing to "vigorously defend" the "visual copyright" of the Mac interface. Fortunately, the new Zenith Z-248 micros purchased by the Navy include Windows as part of the standard package.

Poor handling

Those of you who took advantage of Advanced Logic Systems offer to trade in your MacWrite disk for a $29.95 copy of Word Handler probably feel rotten -- Word Handler is terrible. However -- ALS has a new version out now, though they don't seem to be trying hard to tell people about it. If you want the new version, send your Word Handler disk plus $2 to: Advanced Logic Systems, 1283 Reamwood Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94089.

Get 2; they're cheap

Dynamac Computer Products Inc. (1536 Cole Blvd., Suite 252, Bldg. 4, Golden, CO 80401) has announced "The Flat Mac," a Mac-Plus compatible laptop machine with electroluminescent flat panel screen (512x400), 20 to 40 megabyte internal hard disk, 300/1200 baud internal modem, and 115/230 volt, 50/60 Hz power supply, weighing 18 pounds with all options. Dynamac made the machine compatible by
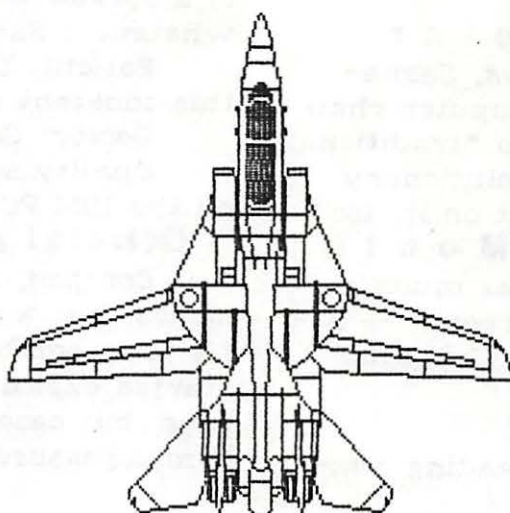
purchasing discounted Mac Plus computers direct from Apple, taking them apart, and then reassembling them with different pieces in a different case. Priced at $5000 to $7000, the machine will be sold through vertical markets and direct to users, not through retail stores. Colby Systems and Intelitec have similar machines which they manufacture for sale to the federal government.

Designer machines

Rumor has it Apple is producing "developer" units of the Paris workstation, a modular Macintosh with 68020 CPU, 13 in. monitor, and 4 megabytes of memory, some equipped with 10 MHz 80286 coprocessors to run IBM PC-AT software.

Draw, pardner

Adobe, makers of the PostScript page description language used in Apple's Laserwriter, will soon release Illustrator, a drawing program. Unlike other such programs, this package will be able to take full advantage of PostScript, including advanced shading, true curves, and font manipulation. First versions will be for the Mac, with a Windows-based IBM PC version to follow.

Nihongo Mac

E/G Word, the award-winning Japanese word processor for the Mac, is now available from Stateside sources. Counterpoint Systems, P.O. Box 1685, Cambridge, MA 02138, is selling Ver. 2.2 for $399 -- and it isn't copy protected.

Who cares?

This newsletter was prepared on ReadySetGo! 3, which is pretty slick. It includes a spelling checker, can import MacDraw and MacPaint graphics and MacWrite and Word text, can draw boxes and rules right on the screen, and has kerning -- WAVE, WAVE -- and letterspacing.

But the tabs don't seem to work.